

REMARKS

Prior to this Amendment, claims 1, 3-5, 7 and 8 are pending in the application, claims 1 and 3 are allowed, claims 4, 5 and 8 stand rejected and claim 7 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowed if rewritten into independent form.

Claim 7 is hereby canceled by this Amendment without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 4 has been amended to remove the features that allegedly lack a written description and to incorporate all of the features recited in claim 7. Thus, Applicants submit claim 4 is in condition for allowance.

Interview Summary

The undersigned thanks the Examiner for conducting the telephonic interview on August 4, 2010. During the interview, the rejection of claim 4 was discussed. It was agreed that if claim 4 were amended to remove the recitation “and wherein the pair of rails shields the preform bodies from the decontaminating liquid sprayed from the spray means” and also amended to incorporate the features of claim 7, claim 4 would be allowable. Also, the Examiner agreed that claims 5 and 8 would be allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 4.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 4, 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

In response, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment to claim 4, which removes those features allegedly lacking a written description, obviates this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4, 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marchau et al. (WO 99/03667) in view of admitted prior art, Swank et al. (US 6,183,691), Kuwata et al. (JP 06-171697) and Doudement et al. (US 5,186,307).

In response, Applicants submit this rejection is moot as independent claim 4 has been amended to incorporate all of the allowable features of dependent claim 7. Thus, claim 4 is allowable for this reason. Lastly, claims 5 and 8 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 4.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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